

May 6, 2002

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

GIRLS AND BOYS TOWN PILOT PROGRAM - STATUS REPORT

On April 2, 2002, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, this office and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) were instructed to report back to the Board within 30 days on the following:

1. The feasibility of developing a pilot program in which ten foster youth would be referred to Girls and Boys Town (Boys Town), located in Nebraska, for participation in its Intensive Residential Treatment Program, with the goal of transitioning youth back to their birth home or community, and
2. The feasibility and cost of developing the pilot program in Los Angeles County.

This is to provide you with a status report as to what we have learned to date and what steps are still needed to complete the feasibility study and cost analysis.

Boys Town was previously approached about the prospect of a pilot program in Los Angeles County. Unfortunately, it appears a pilot program in Los Angeles County is not a viable option at this time. As shown in the attached letter from Boys Town, dated March 26, 2002, the unique conditions at the facility in Nebraska heavily contribute to the success of the program.

The Boys Town Nebraska facility is specially designed to meet the therapeutic, safety, and security needs of severely behaviorally disturbed youth. Boys Town estimates that it would cost approximately \$300 per square foot, plus land, to build a similar facility in our area. In addition, the facility in Nebraska is located adjacent to the Boys Town

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National Research Hospital, which provides numerous pediatric specialists. Due to the estimated costs, Boys Town determined that a program in Los Angeles County would need to serve between 30 to 40 youth on average to be cost effective. Based on this information, we are not recommending a Boys Town pilot in Los Angeles County at this time.

We are continuing to explore the feasibility of a pilot program with a small number of youth that could benefit from the high level of treatment that the Boys Town model offers. Youth participating in the pilot would have to be carefully selected to ensure that any existing family links to the community are not interrupted by their move to Nebraska.

According to DCFS, new statutory provisions require that all out-of-state facilities obtain a certification by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Ed Sosa and Rosa Nefariyeh of the Out-of-Home Care Programs at DCFS are currently working with Boys Town to resolve State licensing issues. One step in the process to determine the appropriateness of placing a youth out-of-state requires an assessment by the County's Multidisciplinary Team. Prior to initiating a certification request for a Group Home to CDSS, the County is required to make a physical inspection of the facility. DCFS plans to schedule an on-site visit at the facility in Nebraska within the next 30 days. The Department is hopeful that the licensing issues can be addressed in a timely manner.

My staff is in the process of scheduling a meeting with DCFS and the MacLaren Administrator to develop the design of the proposed pilot program and begin to identify potential youth that would benefit from the level of care and treatment that the Boys Town program offers. The estimated costs for the pilot program will be determined when the specifics of the proposed program are finalized. We estimate that the proposed pilot plan and cost analysis will be submitted to your Board no later than May 31, 2002.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information, or your staff may contact Kathy House at (213) 974-1323.

DEJ:DL
JEJ.KH:tld

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Director, Department of Mental Health
Administrator, MacLaren Children's Center